



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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September 4, 2000

TO: Internal File

THRU: Bob Davidson, Project Team Lead

FROM: Paul Baker, Reclamation Biologist

RE: Bear Canyon Ridge Subsidence Mitigation, Co-Op Mining Company, Bear Canyon Mine, ACT/015/025-AM00B

SUMMARY:

In June 2000, Division and Bear Canyon Mine personnel noticed a subsidence fracture on the Bear Canyon Ridge. Most of the area does not need repairs, but there are some cracks large enough to potentially injure wildlife or livestock.

The applicant is proposing minimal work using hand tools and no seed. There are some locations where blasting might be necessary

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

OPERATION PLAN

FISH AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 784.21, 817.97; R645-301-322, -301-333, -301-342, -301-358.

Analysis:

Protection and Enhancement Plan

The area contains critical elk winter range and high priority elk summer range. It does not appear there are raptor nests in the immediate area.

TECHNICAL MEMO

The application includes no information about when the mitigation work would be done, but to avoid disturbing wildlife, it should be completed before December 1 or started after April 15. This commitment does not need to be in the application, but the applicant needs to adhere to this time frame as a performance standard.

Findings:

Information in the proposal is adequate to meet the requirements of this section of the regulations. Because the area contains critical elk winter range, the applicant needs to do the work before December 1 or after April 15. This should be enforced as a performance standard.

INTERIM REVEGETATION

Regulatory Reference: R645-301-330, -301-331, -301-332.

Analysis:

The applicant is not proposing to seed the disturbances. Because the fractures are long and narrow and because there are no noxious weeds in the immediate area, this is an acceptable proposal. The Division expects that native plants will be able to quickly invade the area.

Over the next few years, Division personnel should inspect the area to check for signs of a weed invasion, to watch for native plant establishment, to be sure there are no erosion problems, and to look for any signs the fractures reopen.

Findings:

Information in the proposal is adequate to meet the requirements of this section of the regulations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The reviewed portions of the application are adequate and can be approved.